

DISTRICT SCHOOL JOURNAL,

FOR THE STATE OF NEW-YORK.

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DISTRICT SCHOOL JOURNAL.

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TO THE VISITERS OF COMMON SCHOOLS, heretofore appointed by the Superintendent.

THE great benefits derived from the examination of the Schools by the Visitors who performed that duty the last year, have been so signal and manifest, that the Superintendent would earnestly and respectfully request the gentlemen already appointed for that purpose, to renew their inspections during the present year. A copy of the Reports of the Visitors will be forwarded by the 1st of July, to the respective County Clerks, addressed to each Visitor who subscribed any report, which will be delivered on application to the Clerks. These reports will suggest new subjects of enquiry, and, frequently, improved modes of conducting the examinations, and stating the results.

It is also respectfully suggested to the respective Visitors, that by drawing up the results of their observation for the present year, in a series of connected remarks, instead of a tabular form, in the mode adopted in the Abstracts given in the Report, as nearly as may be, much time and labor will be saved, as well to themselves, as to this Department.

Where there are any vacancies in the Boards, or where it would be advisable to increase the number, additional appointments will be made upon the representation of the Board, or of any of the Visitors.

In the following Counties, no Visitors have as yet been appointed, from the want of proper information respecting the persons who would be suitable and willing to act: Albany, Adirondack, Chautauque, Chemung, Fulton, Hamilton, Lewis, Madison, Rockland, Sullivan, Warren, Wayne and Yates.

In the following Counties, Visitors have been appointed, but not a sufficient number to visit all the Schools: Broome, Cattaraugus, Chenango, Otsego, Rensselaer, Columbia, Delaware, Oneida, Oneonta, Ontario, Oswego, St. Lawrence, Seneca, Sullivan, Ulster, and Washington.

The Superintendent will be happy to avail himself of any information which may be given by gentlemen in the above named Counties, to enable him to appoint the necessary Visitors for those Counties. It is hoped that a consideration of the great advantages which must result to the Schools, and to the successful operation of the system, by the gratuitous inspection of gentlemen of known character and intelligence, will induce all who feel an interest in a subject of such vital importance, to take the necessary measures to have full Boards of Visitors appointed for their Counties, and will influence those who may be selected to undertake the task.

JOHN C. SPENCER, Superintendent.
Office of Superintendent of Com. Schools,
ALBANY, JUNE 18, 1840.

SUPERINTENDENT'S DECISIONS.

Mode of proceeding where more than \$400 is necessary to build a School-House; and where it is proposed to collect the amount to be raised in separate instalments at different periods. Studies to be pursued in Common Schools.

The authority of Commissioners in the arrangement of School Districts, is independent of the vote of the districts; and such vote can be regarded only as advisory. Tax-lists should be delivered to the collector promptly.

1. The law does not limit the amount that may be raised by tax for purchasing a site and building a school-house. If the district has not been altered, a vote of two-thirds will be necessary to change the site or to remove the building, and the consent in writing of the Commissioners.

In order to raise more than \$400, there must be a certificate of the Commissioners that a larger sum ought to be raised, and specifying the amount.

2. It would be legal for the district to vote the whole sum to be raised at once, and that is the ordinary course. But I see no objection to their dividing it into instalments to be raised and paid at different periods. The only hazard in it is, that a subsequent meeting might rescind the vote, and then the contractor for the building would be obliged to prosecute. Perhaps also, it would strictly be requisite that each instalment should be separately voted for, as it was

becoming due, so as to enable the Trustees to comply with the letter of the law in making out their tax-list within thirty-days after a tax is voted. But I hold this to be directory only, and not essential.

3. I do not understand the law as limiting the nature or extent of the studies that may be pursued in a district school. But undoubtedly their main purpose is, instruction in the elementary branches, and this purpose must not be defeated or embarrassed by the introduction of the higher branches of education.—With this qualification I see no objection to any district establishing a school of the highest grade.

4. The authority of the Commissioners in their arrangement of school districts, does not depend in the least upon the votes of a district. Its opinion is merely advisory, which they may regard or disregard at their pleasure; although as a general rule it is expedient to promote harmony and good feeling in a district by consulting the wishes of a decided majority in any doubtful case.

The law does not specify the time within which the tax-list must be delivered to the collector. But it ought to be promptly, to prevent loss by persons removing, &c.

May 25, 1840.

JOHN C. SPENCER.

Commissioners of Common Schools can pay over the public money belonging to a District, only on the order of a majority of the Trustees. If paid to one Trustee only, without such order, and misapplied, they are personally responsible for the amount to the district.

Such order can be made, like all other official proceedings, only at a meeting where all the Trustees are present, or have been duly notified to attend.

The commissioners of Palatine paid over the school money belonging to district No. 8, to one of the trustees, upon his application, without the knowledge or consent of his colleagues; and the trustee so receiving it, appropriated the whole to his own use. The

tendent. I am aware that a practice has prevailed to some extent, of the commissioners of Common Schools paying the school money belonging to a district to any one of its trustees. But I cannot perceive the law or principle on which such a practice can be justified. It is a rule admitting of no exceptions, that every official act of the trustees must be performed by the whole body, or by a majority at a meeting, at which all attended, or were notified to attend, and the majority can act in no other case. I know not of any instance in which a single trustee can act for the district, unless where he is the only one. The receipt of money belonging to a district, and the acknowledgment of such receipt, are acts purely official and as important as any others; and I cannot perceive why they must not be performed in the same manner. The law has made no exceptions and there is none required in the nature of the duty. An order by the trustees or a majority of them, can always be given as early as a warrant can be signed by them, and it seems to me there is peculiar propriety in requiring that the money of a district shall be placed under the control of all its trustees. I therefore think in the present case that the commissioners of Palatine are responsible for the money apportioned to district No. —, as they have not legally paid it over, and if they refuse to pay on the order of a majority of the trustees made at a meeting, to attend which all the trustees have been notified, a suit may be maintained against them, or an appeal to the Superintendent will lie.

JOHN C. SPENCER, Superintendent.

Mode of expending Public Money where unequal amounts are raised in the different towns comprising a joint district.

SIR:—The question presented by you is new, and I do not find any decision respecting it. By orig. sec. 5 of title 2, chap. 11, part 1, Revised Statutes, page 340, (2d ed. § 6, page 333, vol. 1,) and subdivision 2, the several towns are authorized to raise in such town a sum for the support of Common Schools, for the then ensuing year, not exceeding that apportioned to their town. Like all other taxes raised

upon a town, I think this must be applied to the exclusive benefit of those who pay it. It would seem to be inadmissible in principle that one town or set of inhabitants should be compelled to pay for the education of children of another town, and of other persons. Nor is there any difficulty in the application of the money. The district school is supposed to have 30 scholars, of whom 15 are from the town A, which has raised a double sum, and 15 from B, which has only raised an equal amount. The teacher's wages are \$20 per month. Take the sum which has been equally contributed by both towns, that is, the total composed of what was raised in B, and a like sum from that contributed by A, and pay this amount to the teacher. The deficiency is then \$5 on each month he taught. Apportion this between the two parts of the district, and each has \$2.50 to pay.—Assess the \$2.50 upon the parents of those who sent to school residing in B,—take the residue of what was contributed by A, and pay it to the teacher and assess the balance due him, if any, on the parents residing in A, who sent to school. This is my opinion merely, not a decision. The question had better be formally presented by an appeal from the decision of the trustees by any inhabitant aggrieved, in which the facts verified by oath should be stated, and a copy served with notice. Respectfully yours,

JOHN C. SPENCER,
Superintendent of Com. Schools.

STATE REPORTS ON EDUCATION.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF COMMON SCHOOLS.

(CONTINUED.)

VI. The Departments for the Instruction of Teachers of Common Schools.

There are two classes of these departments in various academies of the State. One class consists of those established by the Regents of the University, by virtue of chap. 140, of the laws of 1834. There are eight academies, the trustees of which have agreed to establish departments for the instruction of teachers of common schools, in consideration of receiving from the Regents four hundred dollars, a sum supposed to be equal to the expense of such departments. The following are the academies referred to:

Montgomery Academy,	Orange County.
Kinderhook do.	Columbia do.
Washington do.	Washington do.
Fairfield do.	Herkimer do.
St. Lawrence do.	St. Lawrence do.
Oxford do.	Chenango do.
Canandaigua do.	Ontario do.
Middlebury do.	Genesee do.

By the 9th section of the "Act to appropriate the income of the United States Deposit Fund to the purposes of education and the diffusion of knowledge," passed April 17, 1838, it is made the duty of the Regents of the University to require of every academy receiving a distributive share of public money equal to several hundred dollars per annum, to establish and maintain in such academy, a department for the instruction of common school teachers. Under this provision the Regents have required the following academies to establish such departments:

Erasmus Hill Academy, Flatbush, Kings county.
Amenia Seminary, Amenia, Dutchess county.
Albany Female Academy, Albany city.
Troy Female Academy, Troy city.
Genesee Wesleyan Seminary, Lima, Livingston county.
Cortland Academy, Homer, Cortland county.
Rochester Collegiate Institute, Rochester, Monroe county.
Rhaca Academy, Ithaca, Tompkins county.

Upon the whole, the establishment of these departments has had a favorable influence upon the character and qualifications of teachers. The standard has been raised, the demand for competent teachers has increased, and the supply has been materially augmented. It should be made the interest of those who intend to be teachers, to avail themselves of

these departments. This could be effected by a legislative provision, declaring that a certificate of qualification given by the trustees of the academy under their seal, should constitute the person receiving it, a qualified teacher in the common schools of the State, without any further certificate from the inspectors of a town; but that the latter might annul such certificate for conduct affecting the moral character of the individual holding it, subject to the usual right of appeal to the Superintendent. The certificate from these academies would confer upon the holder decided advantages in procuring employment, and would thus have a great tendency to induce the persons engaged in the honorable and important duties of teachers, to make that business a profession. Others would emulate the attainments of those who receive steady employment, and just compensation and a higher standard of qualification would be introduced. In order to render these departments more useful, a regulation will be introduced by the Superintendent, making it an indispensable part of the system, that the persons instructed shall be required to practice teaching in the presence and under the direction of the preceptor of the academy.

Believing that with the improvements that can be made in these departments, they can be rendered more efficient in furnishing teachers of common schools of the proper grade, than in any other mode which has yet been suggested, the Superintendent concurs in the recommendation of his predecessor, to authorize the establishment of eight in addition to the present number, that are endowed specially for that purpose, and to increase the allowance to each to the sum of five hundred dollars, to be applied exclusively to the support of the department. The present allowance is \$400, which is paid to eight academies. The increase recommended would amount to \$3,800, which can be spared without inconvenience from the annual surplus of the United States Deposit Fund, estimated, as before mentioned, at \$51,370 13. This surplus is now directed to be applied to increase the pecuniary capital of the common schools. The application of the amount as above suggested, to the education of teachers, would increase the intellectual capital, and improve the condition of the schools more effectually, than the distribution of money to deficient teachers.

REPORT OF THE BOARD OF VISITERS, FOR THE COUNTY OF LIVINGSTON.

Your committee have been personally engaged in examining the Common Schools in the county; they have witnessed what it is presumed the report from each county in the State will bear testimony to; the degradation of a great proportion of our common schools, and their utter unfitness to impart moral, physical and intellectual instruction to the youth of the State. The degrading facts which the Visitors have witnessed are not new facts; they are of many years standing, and without inquiring on whom these facts are justly chargeable, whether to legislative delinquency, or to parental neglect, or to any defect in our social institutions, your committee deem it their duty, fearlessly to point out the imperfections of our school system, and respectfully to suggest such remedies as they deem essentially necessary to give efficiency to our schools, and impart to the human mind divine, knowledge; knowledge of the revealed will and physical laws of our Creator, and enable the youth of this State to discharge the high duties, on the faithful and intelligent performance of which, depends the permanence of our political institutions.

The incompetence of school-masters, has been a standing remark almost from time immemorial. Is this evil entailed upon the human race, or does it admit of a remedy? As well might it be asked, can discipline be introduced into a disorderly army?—Can ignorant officers be made intelligent officers?—This has been accomplished, and from motives far less patriotic than the diffusion of popular instruction.

If it is necessary, as no doubt it is, that the officers and men of an army be called together, as at Trenton the past season, for exercise and mutual instruction, there appears nothing mysterious in supposing establishments for the education of teachers, normal schools, essential for the instruction of an army of 10,000 drill sergeants. How these 10,000 men at wages a little above the price of common labor, can be rendered fit instructors, can be made capable of imparting moral, physical and intellectual instruction, without first receiving moral, physical and intellectual instruction themselves, seems a little difficult to imagine. However glaring this absurdity, it is recognized by the school system; it is practised

under the school system. It is true that the normal schools will cost money. So, too, the discipline and instruction of an army cost money. Railroads and canals cost money. Various accommodations to trade and commerce also cost money. To expect that the preparation of 10,000 teachers without a premium under some form, without the expenditure of money, or to expect an improved education of the youth of the State, without more competent instructors, is an idle delusion. May it not be fairly asked, what more worthy object of expenditure than the moral, social and intellectual improvement of the human family of the State of New-York?

On the subject of normal schools, your committee concur in the sentiments of a memorial to the Legislature in 1837, and give an extract from the memorial.

"Your memorialists further submit to the consideration of your honorable body, the propriety of establishing in each county a normal school, for the gratuitous instruction of schoolmasters. The expense to be defrayed equally by the respective boards of supervisors and by the State. The average number of school districts in each county does not vary far from two hundred, and it is believed that the teachers in each of these districts would be greatly benefitted by passing a given period in a pattern school.

"Your memorialists respectfully submit that it is in vain to expect any great and permanent improvement in our schools, without more competent instructors. The residence in each county of a scientific and well-educated instructor, such as it is presumed will be called to reside in the normal schools, would be attended with great and diffusive benefit. These schools would become centres from which science would radiate over the respective counties. A knowledge of scientific principles is essential to the successful prosecution of every department of business. And your memorialists humbly suggest, that knowledge and scientific principles must have a local habitation, and a legal settlement in each county, with a view to the gradual instruction of the mass of the people, before this State can attain its high destinies."

Your committee believe that it is impossible to improve the schools of this State, without placing them under some modification of government which will insure obedience on the part of trustees of districts to such regulations as are necessary and essential to all well conducted schools. These regulations must be made by the Legislature, and not by the local boards. The masses as low and ignoble, must look to the moral and intellectual improvement of the people at large. The masses of all nations must be made capable by education, of self-government, or be governed by military force. Legislation must dare to regulate schools, as a wise parent regulates his household. It must disregard the clamor of ignorant parents, and the evanescent popularity which results from gratifying their cupidity. There is no intrinsic difficulty in this subject; efficient teachers can be trained, and it matters not at what expense. The evils of incompetent instructors will give way before patient and paternal legislation. Judging from the past, whether this patient legislation can be expected, your committee will not hazard an opinion. Probably, when in the course of time, enlightened public opinion shall demand that the funds of the people shall be judiciously and prudently, and intelligently applied to the moral and intellectual education of the youth of this State, this boon, diffused education, like the restoration of his native rights to man from the feudal grasp, will be tardily granted.

Next to the evil of incompetent masters comes the miserable practice of admitting the introduction of class-books of every grade and description of character. Schools containing thirty or forty scholars, are divided in fifteen or twenty different classes, because suitable class-books are not furnished, and frequently there is only one book to half a dozen scholars. This practice of teaching by books of all grades of character, has been known to the members of the Legislature for many years. The enlightened predecessor of the present Superintendent, and the friends of common schools, have protested against the practice again and again. Still, no effective measures have been adopted. The evil has long been well known, but there has been wanting firmness and decision of character in some department to remedy it. It is wasting time to show the absurdity of this practice. It would not be permitted for a day in our colleges and higher seminaries. Why should it be permitted in our common schools? Your committee forbear to answer the question. Our colleges are

under the government of their respective faculties.—Our common schools are under the government of laws prescribed by the Legislature.

Your committee entertain a confident opinion that the class-books of the common schools ought to be uniform throughout the State, but to bring about this great change immediately, would be attended with much difficulty. It would be opposed by many conflicting interests, and the expediency of its immediate enforcement is perhaps somewhat doubtful. A gradual change would be attended with far less sacrifice of vested capital, and will probably be more conformable to public opinion. According to our present school system, we have an army of half a million of youths without any immediate efficient power, or efficient regulation, between the commander-in-chief and the drill sergeants. Your committee believe that the system imperatively requires that provision be made by law for the appointment of a county superintendent, or what might be preferable, a county board of education, to be liberally paid, whose duty it shall be made, and the exercise of the duty exacted, to prescribe class-books for the respective counties. The beneficial effects of uniform school-books will be instantly felt and acknowledged, and perhaps advantages will result from county instead of State uniformity. To decide on the merit of class-books, will be in many cases extremely difficult, and conflict with powerful influences, and as different boards will no doubt come to different decisions, the merit of different works will be tested, and compared by their introduction into different counties. Still, if in the present chaotic state of our schools, it is thought that neither State nor County uniformity can at present be attained, that either of them is too broad a move for a first step, your committee concur in advising town uniformity as absolutely indispensable. They respectfully suggest that to visit schools under the authority of the Superintendent, until power is vested in some individual or board to require the class-books in all the districts in each town to be uniform, is an idle waste of labor. It is difficult to explain why an improvement so level to the apprehensions of all, should have been so long delayed. Neither the ignorance of parents, nor legislative apathy in relation to common schools, will sufficiently account for it. The first complaint and the last complaint of the school-master which greets a visitor in every district, is, "My time, and the time of my scholars is half wasted, and the rest is put to the severest trials; my scholars are not advancing, from the simple want of uniform class-books." A moment's attention will convince any one that this object is only attainable by legislative provisions. It is obvious that it is quite impossible for ignorant parents, and intelligent parents, for careless guardians and masters to unite in the purchase of similar books. Their opinions in each case are probably derived from a book-seller or an author. An author's runner, or from some other source equally liable to be biased by selfish consideration. In many cases probably economy decides instead of author or author's runner. The continuance of this practice is too monstrous to be permitted. Your committee are not aware of a single instance where the town boards of inspectors have acted on this subject, or of a single common school in the county where the books are uniform.

Judging from past experience and the present state of our schools, to expect concerted, intelligent and energetic action from our town boards of inspectors, is a fatal delusion. The mistake consists in confiding to ignorant boards, the supervision of matters they are incompetent to supervise; to correct delinquencies which, perhaps, they themselves have caused or participated in. Had these boards been competent, our schools would have, years ago, assumed a different character under all the defects of our school system. Your committee respectfully represent that this farce of instruction, called common school education, by schools without supervision, by incompetent teachers, by every variety of books, and without books, in houses unfurnished and unfit for use, which may be witnessed in three-fourths of the common schools of this State, imperatively demands the interposition of the honorable the Legislature. To expect that enlightened legislators or enlightened citizens, will grow out of shantee institutions of this kind, is to expect that corn will grow from a sterile rock. By a law of our Creator, corn will partake of the quality of the soil from which it grows.

Your committee, from an unwillingness to extend this report too far, have omitted many topics intimately connected with our common schools. It seems indispensable that there should be in every

county authority to coerce obedience and conformity to the provisions of the Act "to regulate Common Schools," after its revision, with the right of appeal to the Superintendent. At present, cases of greater or less delinquency are innumerable; they are continued from year to year, and yearly, like bad habits, gain strength by their continuance. Instances have come to the notice of your committee, in wealthy districts, where the school-house was not worth twenty dollars, and devoid of every convenience and accommodation, and where schools have been omitted for a year at a time from the neglect of the trustees, the leading inhabitants of course acquiescing in the neglect, and thereby reducing their taxes.

If there were an authorized individual or board in each county, to call on, under mild penalties, the delinquent districts, of whatever character the delinquencies might be, or if the delinquent districts were exposed by a half yearly or yearly report published in each county, public opinion would go far to correct these besetting sins of careless districts.

There is but one opinion as to the beneficial effects of school district libraries. The results of these libraries are certain; they will become more and more manifest yearly. Lads, whose minds have been enriched by reading one or two hundred volumes, will, in a few years, give new tone and energy to our school districts. There are 169 school districts in the county, of which 104 districts are supplied with libraries; proofs of the unfitness of ignorant trustees to select their libraries from bookstores or travelling book-peddlars, have occurred in several districts. In one case, the library was kept at the house of a selfish trustee, and the teacher and scholars were ignorant of its existence. These evils call for more energetic supervision.

The lay members of your committee bear willing testimony to the cordial and intelligent aid rendered by the Rev. Clergy of different denominations, who were appointed members of the board of visitors for the county. The service of the Rev. Clergy in improving our common schools, will be of great importance, and it is confidently believed that those services will be cheerfully rendered.

Your committee take great pleasure in remarking, that amidst the barren wastes they have had to explore, they have examined some schools, generally some in each town, which do great credit to the trustees and teachers. The proofs of scholarship and respectable scientific attainments in the new schools referred to, conclusively show the incalculable importance of this great State institution of common schools. To render certain the progressive advance of the people at large, in civilization, and the rapid moral, social and intellectual improvement of the youth of this State, the attention of the honorable the Legislature to a thorough reform of the school system, seems indispensable.

JAMES WADSWORTH, ALEXANDER BLAIRIE,
JOHN DODGE, SILAS C. BROWN,
R. SLEEPER, E. CAMP,
WM. J. HAMILTON, I. W. MERRILL,
W. H. SMITH, J. E. TOMPKINS,
Visitors.

From the Massachusetts School Journal.

VALUE AND NECESSITY OF EDUCATION.

"From an inherent cause, different opinions will always be entertained of the value of education, by different men. Those who think most correctly upon the subject, will still think differently; and this difference will be measured by the difference in their respective powers of comprehension and forethought. Being infinite in importance, the only question can be, who approximates nearest in his computation of its worth. Its value will be rated by each, just as highly as he can think.

"The necessity of education, who can doubt? The average length of human life is supposed to be between thirty and forty years. How many efforts are to be put forth, how many and various relations to be filled, how many duties to be performed, within that brief period of time! How ignorant of all these efforts, relations, and duties, are the early years of infancy! The human being is less endowed with instincts for his guidance, than the lower orders of animated creation. Consider, then, his condition when first ushered into life. He is encompassed by a universe of relations, each one of which will prove a blessing or a curse, just according to the position which he may sustain towards it; and yet, in regard to all these relations, it is to him a universe of darkness. All his faculties and powers are susceptible of a right direction and control, and if obedient to them,

blessings innumerable and inexhaustible will be lavished upon him. But all his powers and faculties are also liable to a wrong direction and control; and, obedient to them, he becomes a living wound, and the universe of encompassing relations presses upon him only to torture him. And yet, into this universe of opportunities for happiness on the one hand, and of dangers and temptations on the other, he is brought without any knowledge whether he should go or what he should do, by what means he shall secure happiness or avert misery. To leave such a being physically alone, that is, to refuse to provide nourishment, raiment, protection against the seasons and the elements, would be to ensure his destruction. But such abandonment would be mercy, compared with leaving him alone intellectually and morally. Nor is it guidance merely that he needs; for his guides will soon be removed in the course of nature, when he will be left with the dreadful heritage only of an enlarged consciousness of wants, with equal inability to supply them; with capabilities of suffering immensely multiplied and magnified, without knowledge of antidote or remedy. Before, then, his natural protectors, and guardians, and teachers are removed, they will leave their work undone, if he have not been prepared to protect, and guide, and teach himself.—Nay, if the generation that is, do not raise above their own level the generation that is to be, the race must remain stationary, and the sublime law of human progression be defeated.

PRACTICAL LESSON.

OBJECTS.

[In the 'Lectures to Female Teachers on School-keeping,' by Mr. S. R. Hall, we find several excellent plans suggested for calling into exercise the thinking powers of children, among which is the following.]

The teacher holding in her hand the fragment of a stone asks—Children, do you see what I have in my hand? C. Nothing but a piece of stone. T. Well, what do you suppose I am going to do with it? 1st C. I don't know. 2d C. Talk to us about it. 3d C. Tell us to think about it. T. Can any one of you think of anything to say about it? [A pause.] T. Who made it? C. God made it; for he made everything. T. Did he make it for any purpose? C. He did for nothing is made in vain. T. Can you think of any use to which stones are applied? Each one who can think of anything may tell me. C. To make walls.—To make door-steps.—Houses are underpinned with stones.—Do not people pave streets with stones?—I have seen a house made of stones. T. Anything else?—Think. C. Mill-stones to grind corn and wheat with.—I went over a bridge once that was made of stones. T. Can any one think of anything else? C. Hearths are sometimes made of stones. Jambes are also made of marble, which is one kind of stone. T. Who can think of anything else for which stones are useful? C. I remember of reading that Bunker Hill Monument is made of stone.

The teacher may ask the questions several times; and when no one can think of any other, she may explain the mode of obtaining lime from stone—the value of plaster stone as manure, &c.

At another time she holds up a nail and asks—What is this, children? C. A nail. T. What is it made of? C. Iron. T. Can you tell me where iron comes from—does it grow, as trees do? C. No, it is obtained from the ground. T. Can you think of anything else that is made out of iron? C. Yes—a knife, a chain, an axe, a crane, a hoe, a part of ploughs and harrows. T. Can you think of anything else? C. Yes—the stove is made of iron. T. Can you think of anything else? C. Yes—a horse shoe. T. Anything else?

When the teacher has elicited every answer that can be given by the children, she varies her questions, and inquires whether it is very useful, whether people could live in civilized society without it, or whether iron or copper is more useful. The conclusions they will be able to form will be generally found correct. The chief benefit of this course is, the exercise of mind it gives to children. They are led to think, to examine, and to inquire, and will thus be led to form habits of reflection.

A knife, book, pen, piece of glass, watch, flower, stick, &c., may be used in the same manner, and the exercise will always receive attention.

The course may be varied by proposing questions like the following. Can any child mention anything that is great? Why is — great? Who will mention something that is good? Why is — good? Mention something that is valuable. Why is —

valuable? Can you mention anything that is beautiful? Why is it beautiful? Tell me of something that is mean, unkind, cowardly, wicked, virtuous, benevolent, lovely, praiseworthy, &c. &c. In giving answers to these questions, children will often discover reflection surprising to any one who has never made the experiment.

If it is asked, how much time should be occupied in lessons of this character? This must be determined by circumstances. In every primary school, however, some part of both the morning and afternoon ought to be thus occupied.

SELF CULTURE.

DR. CHANNING.

"I do not look on a human being as a machine, made to be kept in action by a foreign force, to accomplish an unvarying succession of motions, to do a fixed amount of work, and then to fall to pieces at death, but as a being of free spiritual powers; and I place little value on any culture, but that which aims to bring out these and to give them perpetual impulse and expansion. I am aware, that this view is far from being universal. The common notion has been, that the mass of the people need no other culture than is necessary to fit them for their various trades; and though this error is passing away, it is far from being exploded. But the ground of a man's culture lies in his nature, not in his calling. His powers are to be unfolded on account of their inherent dignity, not their outward direction. He is to be educated, because he is a man, not because he is to make shoes, nails, or pins. A trade is plainly not the great end of his being, for his mind cannot be shut up in it; his force of thought cannot be exhausted on it. He has faculties to which it gives no action, and deep wants it cannot answer. Poems, and systems of theology and philosophy, which have made some noise in the world, have been wrought at the work-bench and amidst the toils of the field. How often, when the arms are mechanically plying a trade, does the mind, lost in reverie or day dreams, escape to the ends of the earth! How often does the pious heart of woman mingle the greatest of all thoughts, that of God, with household drudgery! Undoubtedly a man is to perfect himself in his trade, for by it he is to earn his bread and to serve the community. But bread or subsistence is not his highest good; for if it were, his lot would be harder than that of the inferior animals, for whom nature spreads a table and weaves a wardrobe, without a care of their own.—Nor was he made chiefly to minister to the wants of the community. A rational, moral being cannot, without infinite wrong, be converted into a mere instrument of others' gratification. He is necessarily an end, not a means. A mind, in which are sown the seeds of wisdom, disinterestedness, firmness of purpose, and piety, is worth more than all the outward material interests of a world. It exists for itself, for its own perfection, and must not be enslaved to its own or others' animal wants. You tell me, that a liberal culture is needed for men who are to fill high stations, but not for such as are doomed to vulgar labor. I answer, that Man is a greater name than President or King. Truth and goodness are equally precious, in whatever sphere they are found. Besides, men of all conditions sustain equally the relations, which gave birth to the highest virtues and demand the highest powers. The laborer is not a mere laborer. He has close, tender, responsible connections with God and his fellow creatures. He is a son, husband, father, friend and Christian. He belongs to a home, a country, a church, a race; and is such a man to be cultivated only for a trade? Was he not sent into the world for a great work? To educate a child perfectly requires profounder thought, greater wisdom, than to govern a state; and for this plain reason, that the interests and wants of the latter are more superficial, coarser, and more obvious, than the spiritual capacities, the growth of thought and feeling, and the subtle laws of the mind, which must all be studied and comprehended, before the work of education can be thoroughly performed; and yet to all conditions this greatest work on earth is equally committed by God. What plainer proof do we need that a higher culture, than has yet been dreamed of, is needed by our whole race?"

Our readers will be gratified to learn that the valuable article on the Fine Arts, from the eloquent pen of Dr. POTTER, is but the first of a series of communications which will add much to the interest and usefulness of our Journal.

DISTRICT SCHOOL JOURNAL.

GENEVA, N. Y., AUGUST 1, 1840.

PESTALOZZI.

The following concise account of the various methods of teaching, so successfully employed by the great Pestalozzi, is drawn from his life by E. Biber; a work abounding with valuable suggestions, and worthy of the careful examination of every teacher. We do not suppose that all these processes of instruction will be approved and adopted by any teacher, but surely every one anxious to elevate his profession, will cheerfully engraft on his own system whatever will improve a part without disordering and impairing the effect of the whole. We are aware that no one method can be the best for all teachers, but unless the profession is prepared to say with Dr. Johnson, "that nothing more is to be learned on this subject," they will gladly try plans that have been tested, adopted and approved by more than a quarter of a century's experience in many of the best institutions in Europe and America. We will begin with Pestalozzi's method of

USING THE SLATE.

The slate may be made one of the most interesting and useful means of instruction, occupying the young during the intervals between the lessons, with exercises that may be adapted to all ages and capacities. Let us first consider its use in teaching spelling and writing.

Give the young child a short word printed on its slate in large characters: for instance,

H A T,

and after this, place in a line underneath the leading points of the different letters, one by one, thus:

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leaving the child to fill up the intervening spaces.—This exercise carried through a few of the earlier spelling series, in which each additional word contains only one new letter, soon familiarizes with the forms of the different letters, so that after some time he may be left to put the dots himself; and lastly, to form the characters without dots. After this introduction to the art of writing, which we have found also the most efficient way of teaching reading, we have never experienced the least difficulty in superadding the use of the written character, or inducing a familiar acquaintance with the small printed type. Nor is this the only exercise in which the child should at this period of his education be called upon to draw lines between given dots; let him also in this way measure and compare their distances, relative positions and proportions, and in this manner, writing becomes a sort of linear drawing. Thus the formation of letters will be greatly facilitated, and the most of that time saved which children spend in correcting bad habits, contracted during a long period of bad writing. Beside in this manner great ease and freedom is given to the hand by cultivating the power of drawing a great variety of forms.

Pestalozzi remarks on this subject, that "writing as well as drawing ought to be practised at first on the slate; for the child learns to handle the pencil neatly and correctly at a much earlier period than the pen. The use of the slate has, moreover, this advantage, that whatever may be wrong can easily be effaced and corrected; whereas on the paper where this is impossible, one ill-shaped letter generally leads to another. Hence it is that in looking over the pages of a copy-book we find so frequently lines in which a regular progression of bad writing can be traced from the beginning to the end.

Another and a very essential advantage seems to me to be this: that on the slate the child effaces even that which is well done at the end of the lesson.—The importance of this point will be felt when we consider the great value of modesty, and the immense injury which the child suffers in a moral point of view, from being led or permitted to make the work of his hands an object of vain display."

We now would show the use of the slate in opening the way to the study of language, by which the child is to be led on to the great object of education—perfect clearness of ideas. The first step of this instruction is to teach the child to speak correctly, not by learned rules, but by simple model sentences. The following are a few examples, which the child may be taught to repeat or write on the slate according to his proficiency:

Papa is kind.

The butterfly is pretty.

The pine is tall.

The child then should be asked, who else is kind? What else is pretty? What else is tall? What else is papa—the butterfly—the pine? &c. &c.

The following are specimens of other exercises of the same kind:

Who, or what, are what?

Tigers are ferocious.

Roots are crooked, &c.

Who, or what, has what?

The lion has strength.

The man has understanding, &c.

Who wishes what?

The creditor wishes to be paid.

The boy wishes to play.

Who wish what?

Sensible people wish what is proper.

Foolish people wish all they fancy.

Children wish to play.

Who can what?

The man can stitch, &c.

Tailors can stitch, &c.

Who, or what, must what?

The bird must eat.

To-morrow must come.

The weather must change.

Hailstones must fall.

"In this manner," says Pestalozzi, "I continue these exercises, both in the singular and plural, through the whole round of declensions and conjugations. With especial reference to the verb, I continue as follows:—First I form the simple connexion between the verb and object:

Attend to the teacher's words.

Cut the stick, &c.

Next, I add a subject. Attend. I attend to, &c. my duty, to my work—welfare. A person who does not attend to any thing, is *inattentive*. Inattention is the cause of many evils, &c.

(We shall continue this subject in our next.)

THE CELEBRATION AT CARYVILLE.

We with much pleasure copy from the Batavia Times the following interesting remarks on one of the most memorable events in the history of Western New-York. Give to teaching the dignity and importance of a profession,—show that we believe the mind to deserve as wise care as the body, and the people will not much longer dwarf the understanding and degrade the sentiments of their children by entrusting them to hirelings. The Common School Teacher must take his place beside the Clergyman, in the respect, confidence and love of the people, or there is little hope for our country.—We regret that we have not space to give the description of the ceremonies of the day. We can only add that the Oration by the Rev. Mr. BEECHER, and the Address by

the Rev. JAMES A. BOLLES, were listened to with deep interest. Seed was sown in good ground, and its fruit we trust will bless generations unborn.

The Fourth was appropriately observed at Caryville, by the laying of the corner-stone of the CARY COLLEGIATE SEMINARY, which was done with all befitting honors. It has already been announced to our readers that the design of this Institution is the education of Common School Teachers. A noble and magnificent object, and one we hope to see fully consummated. The education of the youth of our country is a subject which should interest and call forth the best energies of all who venerate its noble character and are desirous to perpetuate its glorious institutions. And in no other way can this be more effectually done than by renovating and purifying our system of Common Schools—place it upon a basis that shall be firm and commanding. Let those who minister to the intellectual appetite of the rising generation, be men of character—of strict moral integrity—let his standing in society, his moral principles, be as much the subject of inquiry, on hiring a teacher of youth, as his qualifications, and let both be of a high order. When this is done, our Common Schools will assume that elevated rank among the means of learning in our country, which their great and growing importance entitles them to—for it is in them, that our youth imbibe those principles, and form that line of character, which is to render them ornaments to society, or outcasts on the ocean of vice and immorality—that they are in fact, the *nursery of freemen, and the cradle of morality!* In view of the vast benefits to arise from their judicious management, can any one be found among us, so lost to his duties as a moral and accountable agent, as to affect a contempt for these unassuming agents in the formation of our intellectual and moral character as a nation? We know it has become fashionable of late to do so—and we will not deny but what there may have been, in some cases, occasion for it—but it is to obviate this, to do away the occasion for such an opinion, that an effort is now making in behalf of our Common Schools—a desire to elevate the standard of these important auxiliaries in the cause of education; and no man, no matter what may be his condition in life, who views these subjects aright, will, or ought to, hesitate for a moment, in deciding on which side to array himself.

No. 2, on MORAL CULTURE, is mislaid: we hope to recover it.

We regret that the Communication on the subject of NORMAL SCHOOLS came too late for this number.

ORIGINAL COMMUNICATIONS.

THE FINE ARTS AS A BRANCH OF EDUCATION.

It is proposed, in this essay, to offer a few remarks on the claims which the Fine Arts have to our regard, and also, on the place which they ought to occupy in a well arranged and liberal system of public instruction.

The first object of all culture or education, is to develop our intellectual and moral nature. Hence, in selecting branches of study for the young, and books to be read by those of every age, we should have respect to the cultivation of every faculty and susceptibility of the mind. Among these, imagination and taste hold a high place.

By imagination, we either create, from materials furnished by memory, new combinations, or we interpret such combinations, real or imaginary, as are described to us by others. For example; when we invent a story to amuse or interest a child, we exercise the creative power of imagination. The incidents and characters are invented, or imagined, by bringing together various elements furnished by experience or reading, and so grouping them, as to fulfill some conception previously formed in our own minds. The child, in listening to and apprehending the story, exercises the interpreting power referred to. The value of such inventions depends, of course, on their vividness and truth, and on the moral they convey. If clearly and strongly conceived, and fram-

ed so as to correspond with nature and probability, and with the dictates of enlightened conscience, they may serve, as was the case with the parables of Christ, to invest wisdom and virtue with new charms.

In poetry and fiction, the creations of imagination are set forth by means of language; in music, by means of sounds; in sculpture, by means of visible forms in masses; in painting, by means of colors and forms, delineated on a plain surface. To render such creations permanent sources of pleasure and improvement, they must pass under the supervision of another faculty of the soul, called taste. By this faculty we judge how far any combination conforms to the laws of beauty and excellence, and how well adapted it may be to the particular object in view.—The object of the great artist in any department, is to produce such a work as will, within certain limits, embody all possible beauty, while it excludes every defect. By thus presenting to the mind a whole, not only more perfect than any seen in nature, but one as perfect as can be conceived, he would secure through all future time, the admiration of men, while he contributes to their enjoyment and improvement. The taste which the artist employs in conceiving and constructing his work, the spectator must apply to the examination of it. In proportion as he does this, his power of discriminating between beauties and defects, will improve, and the pleasure he derives from nature and art be heightened.

The faculties to which we have now referred, and to which the Fine Arts owe their existence, belong to all men. They subserve a most important purpose in the economy of life. To children, the creations of fancy, or imagination, are a principal source both of pleasure and activity. In youth, this faculty inspires ardour and generosity of purpose, and through life men are stimulated to exertion by the promises with which it clothes the future, and by that irrepresible yearning after a higher excellence to which it gives birth.—It must be evident to every one, then, that much of our happiness and dignity will depend on the direction given to these faculties by culture. If allied to virtue, and placed under the guidance of reason, they will become fruitful sources of enjoyment, and will contribute most efficiently to our intellectual and moral progress. But, on the other hand, they become equally efficient in inducing wretchedness and corruption, where they usurp the place which belongs to reason, and form an alliance with our vicious or malignant propensities. Hence the vast importance of providing for their proper development.

The Fine Arts affords one means to this end. In studying the works of masters in any art, we substitute regular efforts of imagination for those wild and eccentric movements to which it is so prone, and thus we gain control over it. Instead of surrendering our minds to its guidance, and wasting on its dreams the time which ought to be given to duty or improvement, we learn to subordinate it to specific ends.—In this way, too, our conceptions of beauty and sublimity are enlarged and perfected. Taste is refined, the soul learns to breathe freely in an atmosphere above the world, and yet not so remote but that it can return refreshed and invigorated to meet the claims of life. An innocent and elegant resource is thus provided against seasons of leisure and recreation. We close the avenues through which many gross temptations assail the heart, and remedy in part the disproportioned development of our powers, which is occasioned by our profession, or by the spirit of the age.

In our country there is special occasion for this kind of culture. Our social condition is such, that intelligence and activity are awakened to a degree

unparalleled in history. Hitherto, however, they have been directed principally to the development of our physical resources, or to politics. Imagination has been employed on dreams of a golden prosperity for the individual, or on visions of a national greatness which was to be the wonder of the world. Every thing has been measured by the standard of palpable utility, and whatever would not tend to swell the credit side of the balance sheet, or add to reputation and influence, has been held of little account. The essential dignity of the mind, and its independence on the outward world, have been lost sight of. We have regarded ourselves too much as cyphers, without intrinsic value, and dependent for our consideration and importance on position or property—on connection with the state, or on relation to a party. May not the arts contribute to recall us to a sense of our proper worth? By affording to imagination a more tranquil and elevating employment, may they not serve, also, to allay in some degree, the excessive fervour of our activity; and thereby render us more contented and happy. And by cultivating a more delicate and refined taste, may they not lessen the rage for display, which is the vice of our country; and contribute to substitute grace of manner for vulgar pretension, the chaste embellishments of art for extravagance in dress and furniture? May we not thus learn, too, that there is an utility which does not admit of being measured by a material standard; that, though the arts called useful minister to wants more urgent and obvious than those supplied by the Fine Arts, the latter are equally real; and that the civilization of any people must be estimated by the relative importance which is assigned to each. And, finally, may we not hope that by recalling men to a clearer consciousness of their inward powers and endowments, they may serve, in some degree, to fortify them against the encroachments of society, and to save them from a moral and spiritual bondage, which is worse than political servitude.

In the habits of a people few things have a more important influence, for good or evil, than the use they make of leisure. Some relief from labor men must have—something to vary the monotony of life, and restore the mind to a sense of its elasticity. If this relief be not afforded by innocent and improving recreations, it will be sought for in sensual indulgence. In our country it is peculiarly so. The ardor with which men engage here in business, they carry to their pleasures; and, in the absence of higher sources of exhilaration, they rush to the gaming table, and, above all, to the intoxicating cup.—The contrast, in this respect, between our people and those of countries in which the Fine Arts are generally cultivated, is most instructive. Take Germany for example. There the people have access to ardent spirits as well as wine; moral restraints are not more powerful than with us; and yet, in many provinces, drunkenness is almost unknown. It will not be easy to find an explanation of this fact, except in the prevalence throughout the same provinces, of a taste for music and other arts, which has been developed by culture; and in which all the people, from the highest to the lowest, find an inexhaustible resource. Efforts to avert the progress of intemperance are doubtless necessary, and eminently worthy of encouragement. But, to be permanently useful, they should be coupled with measures to supply, from higher and purer sources, the exhilaration which men, when at leisure, always require. If the mind of the reclaimed drunkard be left to brood over vacancy, we must not be surprised that he returns to his cup; nor must we wonder, that so many who are forming habits of indulgence, decline surrendering their pleasures, when they are offered no substitute.

In order to effect a lasting change in the habits of the people, we must raise and purify their tastes. Hence the importance of libraries, of associations for mutual improvement, and of every institution which proposes the diffusion of knowledge. The Fine Arts, however, have one advantage which can hardly be claimed for books. As things now stand, each one selects such book as gratifies his own taste, or as may be thrown in his way by chance, or by the design of others. The consequence is, that the reading of many men only contributes to strengthen their lower propensities. This can hardly be the case with the Fine Arts. Their productions are more limited in their range, and are exposed to more general scrutiny. Among a people, too, who have such notions of decorum as prevail with us, these arts can hardly venture to appeal openly and directly to our worst passions.

There is another benefit to be anticipated in our country from the cultivation of a taste for the arts, to which I will advert in this connection. Foreign travellers have complained of the American people, that they rarely have leisure, and that, when they have, they know not how to enjoy it. There is some truth in the remark. We are eminently a working people. Part of this industry results no doubt from our condition; and from the powerful incitements to enterprise, afforded by a young and prosperous country. Part of it, however, seems to result from impatience of rest. Not a few of the rash adventures and ruinous speculations by which we have distinguished ourselves of late, had their origin in love of excitement, and in aversion to being without occupation. A partial remedy for this evil might be found by diffusing a taste for the elegant and ornamental arts.—These arts would furnish that moderate and agreeable excitement which is so desirable in the intervals of labor. They would tranquilize in some degree minds which have been agitated by business, and would dispose them to seek more frequent relief from its cares, and to plunge with less haste into new, and hazardous, and anxious undertakings. They would teach us all, that there is a time for rest and refreshment as well as for exertion; and that the one may conduce as well as the other, not only to our enjoyment and dignity, but also to our permanent prosperity in business. [To be continued.]

READING.

"If I were to pray for a taste which should stand me in stead under every variety of circumstances, and be a source of happiness and cheerfulness to me through life, and a shield against its ills, however things might go amiss and the world frown upon me, it would be a taste for reading. I speak of it, of course, only as a worldly advantage, and not in the slightest degree superseding or derogating from the higher office and surer and stronger panoply of religious principles; but as a taste, an instrument, and a mode of pleasurable gratification. Give a man this taste and the means of gratifying it, and you can hardly fail of making him a happy man, unless indeed you put into his hands a most perverse selection of books. You place him in contact with the best society in every period of history, with the wisest, the wittiest, with the tenderest, the bravest, and the purest characters which have adorned humanity. You make him a denizen of all nations, a cotemporary of all ages. The world has been created for him. It is hardly possible but his character should take a higher and better tone from the constant habit of associating with a class of thinkers, to say the least of it, above the average of humanity. It is morally impossible, but that the manners should take a tinge of good-breeding and civilization from having constantly before one's eyes the way in which the best bred and the best informed men have talked and conducted themselves in their intercourse with each other. There is a gentle but perfectly irresistible coercion in a habit of reading, well directed, over the whole tenor of a man's character and conduct, which is not less effectual because it works insensibly, and because it is really the last thing he dreams of."

From the Connecticut Common School Journal.
MODES OF INSTRUCTION IN COMMON SCHOOLS;

ADAPTED PARTICULARLY TO SUMMER SCHOOLS.
 (CONCLUDED.)

We have spoken, as if the course to be pursued with a pupil, at setting out in the path of knowledge, was to begin with the study of letters. The best teachers of late, begin with whole words, as *hand, book, &c.*, and, when the pupil has become somewhat familiar with the practice of reading whole words and simple combinations of words, or short sentences, he is required to analyze them, or study the letters separately. In case of beginning to read whole words, we would depart a little from the plan above suggested,—that of writing the lesson the pupil is studying; for, though reading whole words, we would still write single letters.

There is one capital exercise, however, for children, which may and should accompany the reading of whole words, as above. The teacher should procure a quantity of the words the pupil is reading, and have them in a box, ready for use. Thus, suppose the current lesson of a child consists of the two words, *hand* and *book*. In this case, he should have a considerable number of words, of those two kinds, cut from a printed book or newspaper, in large type, together with a few others, as *man*, *horse*, and *cow*. After a class have been reading *book* and *hand*, the teacher or monitor may lay a handful of the words we have mentioned before each pupil, on his desk,* if he have one, if not, on some book spread open, or on a board or bench, and set him to selecting the two words of his lesson, and telling which they are, as well as distinguishing one from the other. In like manner, if the letters are learned before words, the same course may be pursued, in relation to the letters.

One admirable exercise, nearly akin to the foregoing, consists in incorporating letters into words.—Thus, after a child has made some progress in reading, whether after the old plan or the new, we give him a quantity of letters, cut out as above, and allow him to combine them into words.

There is another exercise, beyond this, which may be employed at a very early age. It consists in requiring the pupils to combine written letters into words. To this end, however, the written letters ought to be very plainly written; copy slips would be preferable to any thing else. At a period ~~later~~, he might learn to combine words. Another exercise, and a most admirable one for the slate, might be that of making and combining figures. Thus, after being taught to make 1, 2, 3, &c., he might be taught how to put together 1 and 2, 1 and 3, 1 and 4, &c., and might be taught, also their value, separately and combined.

As the child advances, and becomes able to write his lesson in spelling, and to write well and rapidly, he may amuse himself, as well as improve his mind, in perfecting his lessons still more and more. It may be questioned, whether any special exercises in writing, in the usual way, will be necessary to those who are constantly accustomed to the use of slates, from the very first. Certain it is, that without them, such pupils never fail to write a good hand, as we have seen abundantly proved in both common schools, and institutions for the deaf and dumb.

By this method of employing children, more for the sake of employing them, than any thing else, we thus initiate them into reading, writing, spelling, &c. But we have not yet done with the slate exercises. The further a child advances, and the more he uses his slate, the more he will love to use it, and the more may it be made an efficient instrument, in the way of his improvement.

It would require a volume to set forth, in detail, all the methods which might be devised, of using a slate advantageously, in the business and duties of the Common School. Not that books are to be wholly overlooked and despised; by no means. But far more may be done by pupils, between the ages of three or four and seven or eight years, with nothing but slates and pencils, than by all the books in the world, without the slates.†

* It is quite convenient for every pupil in school, however small, to have a seat of his own, with a back to it, and a desk in front; and each seat and desk should be independent of, and separate from, every other.

† Let us not be understood, as disposed to turn all study into mere play. Far from it. Children should be taught to study, in due time; and to study hard. The great point is, to lead them along, in such a manner, that they will love study. To this end, it is, that we would make their first studies, though not play, yet playful; that their future ones may be voluntary and agreeable.

Books, like slates, should be esteemed as favors, and should in no case be imposed as punishments, nor lessons, as tasks. And yet, as many teachers are apt to manage, there is not a child, in a whole school, who does not see that his lesson is imposed as a task, and the book handed to him to keep him out of mischief; or, at least, as an obstacle, to prevent his doing mischief with so much ease; a clog upon his heels, so cumbersome, that, in traversing the by-paths of roguery, he must go a little more slowly.

As things are now managed, it would be a matter of the greatest surprise, if little children, at school, did not find their lessons irksome, rather than pleasant, and their books a burden, than a source of happiness. But, let a hungering and thirsting be created for them, in the use of their slates, and then let these be given out to them, at a certain time, for a certain time,—five, ten, or twelve, minutes; and then before they get tired of them, or begin to soil them, let them be taken away; and we should soon have far less complaint, than we now do, about dullness of apprehension, and a disrelish for study.

Think of the advantages to be derived to parents, teachers and pupils, from substituting slates for books. In the first place, the expense of the slates and pencils is as nothing, compared with that of books. Secondly, they are better pleased with them. Thirdly, they give more varied employment,—a point of great importance. Fourthly, they prevent the habits of soiling and injuring books, and, by consequence, of being slovenly with other things; (a child, who is slovenly in the use of books, will easily be so in the use of every thing else, unless the habit is counteracted.) Fifthly, a great deal of time is saved to the teacher, to be devoted to discipline and instruction of the rest of the school. This, alone, is worth all the pains which such an innovation upon old usages is likely to cost. And lastly, it prevents the formation of a thousand little habits, as those of biting the nails, picking the nose, rubbing the eyes, shrugging the shoulders, &c. &c.; habits, which, beginning as a relief, either from ennui or actual pain, gradually become, by repetition, almost invulnerable.

But there are a few more special uses of the slate, in the case of pupils who have become tolerably good readers; and, with the pencil, ready writers.—We must, however, be brief, in our remarks.

One is, writing and drawing. We have already alluded to this subject, as a mere employment, and to prevent bad habits. But, after our young pupils get the use of the pencil, and begin to imitate forms, be it ever so roughly, they may not only be employed, but instructed; and that, too, with some regard to system. They may not only be permitted to make angles and triangles, squares and circles, but also irregular ones; and they may be taught to distinguish the one from the other, as well as to combine them in various ways, beginning with the simplest.

Again, in regard to circles. One circle may be made to represent the sun; another, the moon; another, the human head; another, the eye; another, a piece of money, a button, a clock-face, a watch, a ring, or a plate. Not that a circle line represents any one of these, with exactness, unless it be a ring; but because they are bounded by a circular line, which the young eye readily detects, before it detects much else; because it greatly aids in leading the child to observation. Thus, he who draws a circle, to represent the moon, or the human head, will be very aptly led to notice the objects connected with the moon and head, and may easily be induced to represent them, also.

Here, it may be asked, whether exercises of this sort will not degenerate into mere play and picture-making. They may, or they may not. There is no necessity of any such degeneracy. In the first place, the use of the slates should not be continued too long, at any one time. In the second place, they should be taken away, when they play with them; when they depart, we mean, from the intention of the lesson. This punishment, the punishment of privation, is the only one which we ever found necessary, in such cases.

When a pupil knows, that, if he departs widely from the intention of the lesson, his slate will be taken from him, he will usually confine himself to its legitimate and appropriate use.

One word more, however, in regard to drawing circles. The pupil may be shown, that two circles combined, form the figure 8; that one circle forms the letter O, small and large; that a circle with a small break in it, forms the greater part of the large and small C, as well as the large Q, and G, and the small e; and that an important portion of the small

letters, b, d, p, q, s, as well as the large letters, B D and P, R S and U, are made up from a circle; and, finally, that the figures 2, 3, 5, 6, 9, are essential parts of circles.

The teacher whose common sense approves of the suggestions of these paragraphs, and who wishes to prevent the monotony, and tediousness, and disgust, so common in our schools, must remember one caution, which is, "to make haste slowly." Let her procure the slates and long pieces of pencil; they cost but little. But let her not proceed too rapidly, and make too many innovations, at a time. Perhaps she need not, with these hints before her, be, like ourselves, ten or twelve years, in coming to a rational course of management; nor need we have been so long, had the light been thrown in our path, to guide us, which we are now endeavoring to hold out to others.

Proceeding cautiously, however, feeling her way, with care, the teacher will bring her pupils, at length, to such a degree of perfection, in the use of slates and pencils, that much may be done with them, in the inculcation and acquisition of almost every elementary branch which devolves on her to teach.

Much may be done at map-making, provided the pupils can be furnished with large slates; for the small slates, we have mentioned, would hardly be adapted to this purpose. The practice of drawing the windows, table, walls, and floor, already recommended, would prepare the way for it; it is indeed the commencement of it; for what is this very exercise, but map-making? It might easily be extended to drawing the outline of the school-house, the playground, the dwelling-house, to which the child belongs, its various rooms, the garden, the home-lot, the streets, the neighborhood; his native town, &c. When a child has proceeded so far, as to draw the outlines of a county or State, it may be well to alternate another exercise with the last, which consists in teaching him to combine dissected maps, using the other maps, with the county and town lines, as the case may be, as a guide, till he becomes a little familiar with the exercise.

After the pupils have become a little accustomed to putting words together, to form sentences, (printed words, we mean, cut from some book or paper,) a most excellent preparatory exercise, by the way,—words may be given them, for this purpose, by dictation. Thus, the teacher or monitor may dictate to them, slowly, the following list of words, requesting them to write them on their slates, and then proceed to form them into sentences;—*man, short, evil, and, life, the, is, are, trouble, days, full, no, few.*

How many sentences can be formed, which will have force and meaning in them, from these thirteen short words, we are not sure; but we recollect, readily, the following eleven. "Days are short," "The days of man are short," "The days of man are few," "The days of man are few, and full of trouble," "Life is short," "Life is full of evil," "Life is full of trouble," "Man is evil," "Man is full of trouble," "Man is evil, and full of trouble," "Trouble no man."

If a monitor find it difficult, at first, to select such words as would form a pleasing variety of sentences, a little instruction, from an experienced teacher, would remove the difficulty. One way is, for the monitor to take short and easy lessons in a reading-book, and, after noting which of them occur more frequently, and seem to be the most useful for her purpose, to give them out, accordingly.

But we come, finally, to the most important exercise of all,—one, in fact, for which all the others are a preparation, and which consists in framing a single important and interesting word, given out by the teacher, into one or more sentences. Thus, the following words are perhaps given out, to be written down on the slate;—*apple, gold, tree, paper, dog, lion, hawk, snow, wind, angry, head, arm, hand, foot, house, room.*

This is, indeed, a long list, much longer than would appear, at first view, either necessary or useful; but it is selected as an illustration of our meaning. Perhaps the first three of these words might be sufficient, for a single lesson. Each pupil is required to form one or more sentences, into which each of these words enters, as a component part, and to use his own judgment, in the selection and formation of his sentences.

They only, who have pursued this plan of instruction, are aware, how interesting as well as profitable it is to pupils, and how it calls into exercise all their powers and faculties. One great objection to most of the methods of instruction, which now prevail in our Common Schools, is, that they cultivate the mind

but partially or unequally. But that the exercise in question has a more happy effect, will be easily seen, by the following consideration of its results.

Thus, one pupil will make the following use of the list of words referred to. "Charles gave me an apple. Gold is yellow." "Zaccheus climbed a tree." Another will write, "The apple is useful for food, both for men and beasts." "My father has a gold watch." "The elm tree, at the corner of the green, is beautiful." A third, especially when he understands that he may, will write some little anecdote of one or more of the words; perhaps of the word tree. "One of my cousins," he will say, "undertook, one day, to climb an apple-tree after a bird's nest, and when he had got nearly up to it, a rotten limb, on which he had placed his foot, gave way, and he fell across the fence, and injured his back so much that he was lame, and had to stay in the house and keep his bed many months, afterwards. I think he must have been very sorry he attempted to climb after bird's nests."

It may not readily occur to every teacher, that, in this simple act of incorporating words into sentences, varied, as it might be, from time to time, we might at once teach the elements of almost every branch of an English education; not, however, by the hands of any ordinary monitor; for here, the actual personal direction of an ingenious teacher is indispensable.

1. It is an exercise in writing, as has been already repeatedly mentioned; nor are we quite sure that much time need be spent in any other writing lessons, than those which the exercises, already mentioned, and this, above the rest, would involve.

2. It is excellent, as a method of teaching spelling. For, to say nothing of requiring the pupils to spell the words, as a spelling lesson, the very act of writing, and incorporating them into their respective sentences, would almost certainly lead to their right orthography. The teacher, in looking over the exercise, would probably mark the words spelled incorrectly. Every scholar, however, in forming his sentences, should have free access to a dictionary, and be taught to use it. Such a method, in fact, is the most truly practical method of teaching spelling, with which we have ever been acquainted.

3. It may be made the basis of a reading exercise. One of the great difficulties, which teachers have to contend with, is the unfitness of the reading lessons, contained in our reading books, for juvenile apprehension. Children do not as a general fact, understand what they read. To read well, we must understand what we read, and be interested in the subject. In requiring a pupil to read sentences, paragraphs, and stories, formed by himself, both these points would be gained. He would of course understand what he wrote himself, and could he be uninterested in it?

4. Can it be necessary to say, that one of the chief excellencies of lessons of this sort is, that they lead the pupil to compose properly, ere he is aware of it? The exercise, in question, is a thousand times better, for teaching composition, than formal lessons for the express purpose.

5. The use of grammar is to accustom us to speak and write intelligibly. Now, if we can learn to write correctly, it will be a great aid to correct speaking, would lead inevitably to correct writing?

6. It might be made to involve much of geography. Suppose one of the words indicated was Gibraltar. Let it be required of the pupil to give a familiar geographical description of the place; for which purpose, he should be required to study it. It should also be required of him to present his thoughts in his own language, and not in the language of the books he studies.

7. What has been said of teaching geography, in this way, is equally applicable to biography, history, and chronology, and, in some respects, to arithmetic. The words Franklin, Mexico, Plymouth, &c., would involve these varied sciences.

8. The words *head* and *hand* might be made a sort of text or starting point, where, or around which, the pupil might be encouraged to cluster what he could learn of anatomy, physiology, and health; in doing which, as well as in the cases just mentioned, familiar oral lessons, from the teacher to the class, from time to time, would be of immense service, and should never be dispensed with.

9. But it can hardly be necessary to particularize, further. To the ingenious teacher, it will be obvious, that, so far as the elements of a science can be taught, what might with propriety be called the topic system, there is scarcely a single branch, not excepting religion itself, which this exercise may not be

made to include. And, if rightly conducted, it may always involve and inculcate, in every lesson, writing, spelling, reading, composition, grammar, and logic.

Will it be said, by any teachers, that, by the prominence we thus give to slate exercises and oral instruction, we exclude, or seem to exclude, books, almost entirely? Very far indeed from it. The exercises in question serve as an introduction to their profitable use, and to enhance their value. When used, they will be used carefully, as well as highly prized; nor will they be thrown aside, the instant the pupil gets outside of the door of the school-house. They will recall to his mind, in after-life, none but pleasant associations of ideas, and will not serve the purpose, whenever they come in sight, of small doses of nauseating medicines.

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ANECDOTES OF THE ORIGIN OF WORDS.

FOURTH ARTICLE.

Paper is a word deriving its origin from a plant called Papyrus, which grew in ancient Egypt, and from which a species of paper was made by the people of old. The papyrus was a reed several yards in height, and had several coats or skins above one another, like an onion, which were separated with a needle. One of these coats or layers was placed on a table longwise, and another placed above it across. They were then moistened with the muddy water of the Nile, which acted like a species of glue, and were afterwards put under a press and dried in the sun. These sheets, thus prepared, were put together, sometimes to the number of twenty in one leaf or roll, or in proportion to the required thickness of the paper. By smoothing it with a shell, or the tooth of a wild boar, and other processes, the papyrus-rinds were brought to the proper fineness for writing.—Egypt continued to supply the Romans with this article up to the later times of the empire. Generally, however, the raw material was carried to Rome, and there manufactured.

The word *Style* is traceable to a small iron instrument called a Stylus, with which the ancients used to write on waxen tablets. The conversion of the term to its present signification was probably very gradual. *Stylo abstinere*, the Romans used to say; which means, *I forbear writing*. By and bye it came to be applied to the manner of writing.

Akin to these terms is the word *Book*, which, however, we do not owe to the Romans, but to our Saxon or Danish ancestors. Long, long before these wondrous days of ours, when a bundle of rags, introduced at one end of a machine, issues from the other in the shape of snow-white paper, our worthy Teutonic forefathers were content to write their letters, calendars, and accounts, upon wood. Being close-grained, and besides plentiful in the north, the *boe*, or beech, was the tree generally employed for this purpose, and hence came our word *book*.

Bumper is a word of remarkable origin. All good Catholics, once on a time, were in the habit of dedicating their first glass of wine after dinner to the health of their spiritual head, the pope. They drank to him by the name of *bon pere*, the good father, and made a point of doing justice to the toast. The words ultimately became the signal for filling the cups to the brim on all occasions. The word *Beaver*, in the sense of a covering for the head, is now derived, as most people imagine, from the animal of the same name, the fur of which is used in the manufacture of modern hats. Beaver is derived from the Italian word *bevere*, to drink, and the appellation had its origin in the practice, followed by the knights formerly, of converting the helmet into a drinking vessel, when more suitable cups were not at hand.—Our English word *beverage* comes from the same Italian root.

It has always puzzled us very much to tell why the letter *e* in certain words should have the sound of *o*, or, rather, why the words in question were not spelt with the last of these letters instead of the first. One of the words to which we refer is *Sew*. Etymology supports us in our suggestion, that this word should properly be spelt with an *o*, for it is actually derived from the word *sow*, a swine, a pig, a grunter. The thing came about in this way:—*Sus* (in the second case *suis*) is the Latin for a sow, and the bristles of this animal being formerly used for sewing instead of needles—as they are by shoemakers in our day—the word *suo*, to sew, was founded upon *sus*. Of course our English *sew* came from the Roman *suo*, with which it is identical in meaning. Is it not odd to think that the term designative of the elegant, and not less useful than elegant, employment of ladies' fingers, should be derived from the name or rather the bristles of a hog?

The next word that occurs to us is *Cardinal*, which is derived from the Latin *cardo* (in the second case *cardinis*), a hinge. Certain virtues are called cardinal, because all others hinge on them; and the highest dignitaries of the church of Rome received the same appellation, because the possession of these virtues was supposed to constitute their title to that lofty ecclesiastical grade. In like manner, the simple numbers (up to 10) are termed cardinal, because all others hinge on and are compounded of them. The appellation of *Dauphin*, borne by the eldest son of the king of France for many centuries, is very generally believed to arise from the province of *Dauphiny* in France. But, in reality, the title of dauphin, as borne by a prince, would appear to have given the province its name. The title is said to have originated in the circumstance of one of the lords of that

district, who flourished in the ninth century, having caused a *dolphin* to be printed on his shield as an emblem of the mildness of his reign (these animals being reputed, by the ancients, as extremely friendly to man); and his successors, in honor of his memory, adopted the animal's name (corrupted through time to *dauphin*) as a title of dignity. One of the chain of dauphins, however, in the fourteenth century, becoming disgusted with life through the loss of his only son, whom he let fall into the river Isere as he was playing with him at an open window, transferred his dominions to Charles Duke of Normandy, grandson to Philip of Valois, king of France, upon condition that the title of dauphin should be forever borne by the eldest son of France. In memory of the true origin of the term, the crown of the French heir-apparent is composed of four dolphins. The Latin form of dauphin is *delphinus*, and hence the term *Delphin Classics*, which denotes a splendid edition of the ancient authors, compiled, for the use of the dauphin, by the best French scholars of the reign of Louis XIV. The *Delphin Classics* have been frequently republished in this country, and are works, certainly, of great value and utility. Not their slightest recommendation is the very valuable series of indices appended to them. These times of ours have made, whether for good or for evil, such sweeping changes on old forms, that the *Delphin Classics* are likely to be the only visible memorial that such a title as dauphin was ever borne by the youthful majesties of France.

The appellations of kings and courts are things akin to each other, and we may, without harsh transition, explain to our readers the title of (*Sublime*) *Porte*, which they may often have seen applied to the court of the Turkish empire. The principal gate at the entrance of the seraglio at Constantinople, is a noble structure of marble, built by Mahomet II., as recorded thereon by an inscription in gold and azure. This gate is called, by way of eminence, the *Porte*, from the Latin *porta*, a gate; and from this, one of the most prominent objects about the royal residence of the Grand Turk, does his court derive its common name. Formerly, the gate in question was guarded by fifty mutes, who conversed in signs, and the inmates of the dwelling within were as fettered captives. But, in this respect, at least, our age has seen a great and good reformation. The chains of prejudice have been thrown off, and the women of Turkey are in progress of being restored to the freedom which has been so long withheld from them. The prince, it is said, has set the example by opening the *Porte*, and permitting those within to enjoy, at their will, the blessed air of heaven.

Peculiar, as it ought to be, is a singular word.—*Pecu*, a Latin term, denotes a flock, and from it comes the diminutive *peculium*, a little flock. Now the slaves who herded the cattle of farmers in ancient days received a small stock as their fee, exactly as the Scottish shepherds of the present day are remunerated, in part at least, for their services. The slave's little stock, or *peculium*, gave origin to the adjective *peculiaris*, translated into English by the word *peculiar*, signifying any thing strictly and undeniably one's own, as apart from the property of others. No doubt, the term had reference at first only to cattle, but ultimately it extended to possessions of every kind. The word *Inculcate*, in its ordinary acceptation, implies to instil—to “impress” anything upon the mind. A teacher is told by parents to “inculcate” such and such good lessons upon the mind of their hopeful offspring. Little do the parents in general know, that, in using this language, they are, etymologically speaking, bidding the preceptor “to stamp in with his heel” the said lessons upon the skull of young master. Such is the true meaning of *inculcate*. It springs from *calx*, the heel, or rather from the derivative verb *calco*, to stamp or kick, and *in*, into: a very pithy etymology, indeed it must be allowed.

[From Chambers' Edinburgh Journal.]

TRACES OF THE ORIGIN OF A FEW USEFUL ARTS.

The term “good old English fare” is frequently used without much knowledge of what that fare consisted. “The roast-beef of Old England, so well known to song, existed only in poetical visions.—The Percy family have in their possession a book, containing the household system of an earl of Northumberland, in the reign of Henry VII., in which every thing is set down with a precision which would amaze a veteran housekeeper of our day.” This has always been one of the wealthiest and most liberal establishments in England. The regular household

consisted of one hundred and sixty-six persons, including the earl's family, knights and gentlemen, and domestics, with their families; in addition to these, preparation was made for fifty guests every day.—From this book it appears, that from Midsummer to Michaelmas—September 20th—they had fresh meat, so called, but lived on salted provisions all the rest of the year. And this fare was so much the worse, because they had no vegetables worth naming. Potatoes were not introduced till a century after; and in the succeeding reign, when the queen wanted a salad, she was obliged to send a man for it to Flanders. The book directs that “My lord has on his table for breakfast, at seven in the morning, a quart of beer and wine, two pieces of salt fish, six red herrings, four white ones; and on flesh days, half a chine of beef or mutton boiled.” The defects of this meal could not have been supplied by bread, because England was not at that time an agricultural country.”

In these olden times, “the whole family, bond and free, sat at one table, the distinctions of rank being marked by the elevation of different parts of the table, or by the *salt*, which was generally large and of carious workmanship, placed upon the board to mark the boundary line. At the Percy table, the earl's family were elevated above the knights and gentlemen, and they, in turn, above the common herd of retainers. The earl's table was provided with linen, that of the knights also had a table-cloth, which a distinguished historian conjectures was washed once a month, though of this there is no certainty. It may enlighten us as to the scrupulous neatness of that day, to know, that the cost of washing in this family of two hundred persons, was never to exceed forty shillings a-year, most of which was expended on the linen of the chapel.” Soap is a comparatively modern invention, and in some parts of continental Europe it is yet hardly known or any substitute for it. Knowing English travellers in France always carry a piece of soap with them.

The art of preparing deals of timber has been greatly simplified in modern times. “The old practice in making boards was to split up the logs with wedges: and inconvenient as the practice was, it was no easy matter to persuade the world that the thing could be done in any better way. Saw-mills were first used in Europe in the fifteenth century; but so lately as 1555, an English ambassador, having seen a saw-mill in France, thought it a novelty which deserved a particular description. It is amusing to see how the aversion to labour-saving machinery has always agitated England. The first saw-mill was established by a Dutchman, in 1663; but the public outcry against the newfangled machine was so violent, that the proprietor was forced to decamp with more expedition than ever did Dutchman before.—The evil was thus kept out of England for several years, or rather generations; but in 1768, an unlucky timber merchant, hoping that after so long a time the public would be less watchful of its own interests, made a rash attempt to construct another mill. The guardians of the public welfare, however, were on the alert, and a conscientious mob at once collected and pulled the mill to pieces. Such patriotic spirit could not always last; and now, though we have nowhere seen the fact distinctly stated, there is reason to believe that saw-mills are used in England.”

Chimnies are altogether of modern invention.—“Not a vestige of a chimney is found in Herculæum, nor is there any reason to believe that they were known in ancient times. The name was given to the hole in the roof through which the smoke escaped after the manner alluded to by Horace, when he compared care to smoke passing round the ceiling. The ancients made use of the smoke to season the wood which they used for particular purposes; such as making ploughs, waggons, and rudders. Still it was a serious inconvenience to them, and they tried various means to rid themselves of an evil, which caused them to shed many tears. They peeled the bark from wood; immersed it in water, and let it dry; hardened it over the fire; soaked it in the lees of oil; but all to no purpose. Athenæus says, that one of the qualifications of a good cook is to know in which direction the smoke will move, for it often spoils many dishes. Columella gave directions for making the kitchen roof so high as not to be set on fire.” It is remarkable that the Romans had not hit upon the idea of chimnies, for they appear to have been acquainted with a plan of heating houses by flues of heated air.

[To be concluded in next number.]

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